



ISTEP+: Grade 8

English/Language Arts

Released Items and Scoring Notes

Writing Prompt
Standard 5: Writing Applications
Standard 6: English Language Conventions

Class Leadership Roles

Read the writing prompt below and complete the writing activity.

It's the beginning of the school year, and the teacher is assigning class leadership roles. Some of these roles include field trip planner, lunchroom monitor, and class pet caretaker.

Write an essay to your teacher in which you explain what leadership role you would like to be assigned and tell why you want to lead that activity. You may choose one of the roles above or create your own role.

Be sure to include

- a title and description of the leadership role you want
- a description of the knowledge, experience, or skills you have that make you a good candidate for the leadership role
- how this leadership experience would help you
- an introduction, a body, and a conclusion to your essay

Writing Applications Rubric Grades 5–12

| SCORE POINT 6 |
|--|
| <p>A Score Point 6 paper is rare. It fully accomplishes the task in a thorough and insightful manner and has a distinctive quality that sets it apart as an outstanding performance.</p> |
| <p>Ideas and Content</p> <p>Does the writing sample fully accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present a unifying theme or main idea without going off on tangents? • stay completely focused on topic and task? <p>Does the writing sample include thorough, relevant, and complete ideas? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include in-depth information and exceptional supporting details that are fully developed? • fully explore many facets of the topic? |
| <p>Organization</p> <p>Are the ideas in the writing sample organized logically? Does the writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present a meaningful, cohesive whole with a beginning, a middle, and an end (i.e., include an inviting introduction and a strong conclusion)? • progress in an order that enhances meaning? • include smooth transitions between ideas, sentences, and paragraphs to enhance meaning of text (i.e., have a clear connection of ideas and use topic sentences)? |
| <p>Style</p> <p>Does the writing sample exhibit exceptional word usage? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include vocabulary to make explanations detailed and precise, descriptions rich, and actions clear and vivid (e.g., varied word choices, action words, appropriate modifiers, sensory details)? • demonstrate control of a challenging vocabulary? <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate exceptional writing technique?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the writing exceptionally fluent? • Does it include varied sentence patterns, including complex sentences? • Does it demonstrate use of writer's techniques (e.g., literary conventions such as imagery and dialogue and/or literary genres such as humor and suspense)? |
| <p>Voice</p> <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate effective adjustment of language and tone to task and reader? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exhibit appropriate register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect) to suit task? • demonstrate a strong sense of audience? • exhibit an original perspective (e.g., authoritative, lively, and/or exciting)? |

NOTE: These scoring rubrics are used with statewide assessments in Grades 5–12.

Writing Applications Rubric Grades 5–12

| SCORE POINT 5 | |
|---|--|
| A Score Point 5 paper represents a solid performance. It fully accomplishes the task, but lacks the overall level of sophistication and consistency of a Score Point 6 paper. | |
| Ideas and Content | |
| <p>Does the writing sample fully accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present a unifying theme or main idea without going off on tangents? • stay focused on topic and task? <p>Does the writing sample include many relevant ideas? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide in-depth information and more than adequate supporting details that are developed? • explore many facets of the topic? | |
| Organization | |
| <p>Are the ideas in the writing sample organized logically? Does the writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present a meaningful, cohesive whole with a beginning, a middle, and an end (i.e., include a solid introduction and conclusion)? • progress in an order that enhances meaning of text? • include smooth transitions (e.g., use topic sentences) between sentences and paragraphs to enhance meaning of text? (Writing may have an occasional lapse.) | |
| Style | |
| <p>Does the writing sample exhibit very good word usage? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include vocabulary to make explanations detailed and precise, descriptions rich, and actions clear and vivid? • demonstrate control of vocabulary? <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate very good writing technique?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the writing very fluent? • Does it include varied sentence patterns, including complex sentences? • Does it demonstrate use of writer's techniques (e.g., literary conventions such as imagery and dialogue and/or literary genres such as humor and suspense)? | |
| Voice | |
| <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate effective adjustment of language and tone to task and reader? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exhibit appropriate register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect) to suit task? • demonstrate a sense of audience? • exhibit an original perspective (e.g., authoritative, lively, and/or exciting)? | |

NOTE: These scoring rubrics are used with statewide assessments in Grades 5–12.

Writing Applications Rubric Grades 5–12

| SCORE POINT 4 | |
|---|--|
| <p>A Score Point 4 paper represents a good performance. It accomplishes the task, but generally needs to exhibit more development, better organization, or a more sophisticated writing style to receive a higher score.</p> | |
| Ideas and Content | |
| <p>Does the writing sample accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present a unifying theme or main idea? (Writing may include minor tangents.) • stay mostly focused on topic and task? <p>Does the writing sample include relevant ideas? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include sufficient information and supporting details? (Details may not be fully developed; ideas may be listed.) • explore some facets of the topic? | |
| Organization | |
| <p>Are the ideas in the writing sample organized logically? Does the writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present a meaningful whole with a beginning, a middle, and an end despite an occasional lapse (e.g., a weak introduction or conclusion)? • generally progress in an order that enhances meaning of text? • include transitions between sentences and paragraphs to enhance meaning of text? (Transitions may be rough, although some topic sentences are included.) | |
| Style | |
| <p>Does the writing sample exhibit good word usage? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include vocabulary that is appropriately chosen, with words that clearly convey the writer's meaning? • demonstrate control of basic vocabulary? <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate good writing technique?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the writing fluent? • Does it exhibit some varied sentence patterns, including some complex sentences? • Does it demonstrate an attempt to use writer's techniques (e.g., literary conventions such as imagery and dialogue and/or literary genres such as humor and suspense)? | |
| Voice | |
| <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate an attempt to adjust language and tone to task and reader? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally exhibit appropriate register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect) to suit task? (The writing may occasionally slip out of register.) • demonstrate some sense of audience? • attempt an original perspective? | |

NOTE: These scoring rubrics are used with statewide assessments in Grades 5–12.

Writing Applications Rubric Grades 5–12

| SCORE POINT 3 | |
|--|--|
| A Score Point 3 paper represents a performance that minimally accomplishes the task. Some elements of development, organization, and writing style are weak. | |
| Ideas and Content | |
| <p>Does the writing sample minimally accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attempt a unifying theme or main idea? • stay somewhat focused on topic and task? <p>Does the writing sample include some relevant ideas? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include some information with only a few details, or list ideas without supporting details? • explore some facets of the topic? | |
| Organization | |
| <p>Is there an attempt to logically organize ideas in the writing sample? Does the writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a beginning, a middle, or an end that may be weak or absent? • demonstrate an attempt to progress in an order that enhances meaning? (Progression of text may sometimes be unclear or out of order.) • demonstrate an attempt to include transitions? (Are some topic sentences used? Are transitions between sentences and paragraphs weak or absent?) | |
| Style | |
| <p>Does the writing sample exhibit ordinary word usage? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contain basic vocabulary, with words that are predictable and common? • demonstrate some control of vocabulary? <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate average writing technique?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the writing generally fluent? • Does it contain mostly simple sentences (although there may be an attempt at more varied sentence patterns)? • Is it generally ordinary and predictable? | |
| Voice | |
| <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate an attempt to adjust language and tone to task and reader? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate a difficulty in establishing a register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect)? • demonstrate little sense of audience? • generally lack an original perspective? | |

NOTE: These scoring rubrics are used with statewide assessments in Grades 5–12.

Writing Applications Rubric Grades 5–12

| SCORE POINT 2 |
|---|
| <p>A Score Point 2 paper represents a performance that only partially accomplishes the task. Some responses may exhibit difficulty maintaining a focus. Others may be too brief to provide sufficient development of the topic or evidence of adequate organizational or writing style.</p> |
| <p>Ideas and Content</p> <p>Does the writing sample only partially accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attempt a main idea? • sometimes lose focus or ineffectively display focus? <p>Does the writing sample include few relevant ideas? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include little information and few or no details? • explore only one or two facets of the topic? |
| <p>Organization</p> <p>Is there a minimal attempt to logically organize ideas in the writing sample?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the writing have only one or two of the three elements: beginning, middle, and end? • Is the writing sometimes difficult to follow? (Progression of text may be confusing or unclear.) • Are transitions weak or absent (e.g., few or no topic sentences)? |
| <p>Style</p> <p>Does the writing sample exhibit minimal word usage? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contain limited vocabulary? (Some words may be used incorrectly.) • demonstrate minimal control of vocabulary? <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate minimal writing technique?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the writing exhibit some fluency? • Does it rely mostly on simple sentences? • Is it often repetitive, predictable, or dull? |
| <p>Voice</p> <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate language and tone that may be inappropriate to task and reader? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate use of a register inappropriate to the task (e.g., slang or dialect in a formal setting)? • demonstrate little or no sense of audience? • lack an original perspective? |

NOTE: These scoring rubrics are used with statewide assessments in Grades 5–12.

Writing Applications Rubric Grades 5–12

| SCORE POINT 1 | |
|---|--|
| <p>A Score Point 1 paper represents a performance that fails to accomplish the task. It exhibits considerable difficulty in areas of development, organization, and writing style. The writing is generally either very brief or rambling and repetitive, sometimes resulting in a response that may be difficult to read or comprehend.</p> | |
| Ideas and Content | |
| <p>Does the writing sample fail to accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Is it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • difficult for the reader to discern the main idea? • too brief or too repetitive to establish or maintain a focus? <p>Does the writing sample include very few relevant ideas?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it include little information with few or no details or unrelated details? • Is it unsuccessful in attempts to explore any facets of the prompt? | |
| Organization | |
| <p>Are the ideas in the writing sample organized illogically?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does it have only one or two of the three elements: beginning, middle, or end? • Is it difficult to follow, with the order possibly difficult to discern? • Are transitions weak or absent (e.g., without topic sentences)? | |
| Style | |
| <p>Does the writing sample exhibit less than minimal word usage? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contain limited vocabulary, with many words used incorrectly? • demonstrate minimal or less than minimal control of vocabulary? <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate less than minimal writing technique? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lack fluency? • demonstrate problems with sentence patterns? • consist of writing that is flat and lifeless? | |
| Voice | |
| <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate language and tone that may be inappropriate to task and reader? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate difficulty in choosing an appropriate register? • demonstrate a lack of a sense of audience? • lack an original perspective? | |

NOTE: These scoring rubrics are used with statewide assessments in Grades 5–12.

Language Conventions Rubric Grades 5–8

In their writing, students will apply the Standard English conventions defined in the Indiana Academic Standards for their grade and all previous grades.

| Score | Does the writing sample exhibit a good command of language skills? |
|----------|--|
| 4 | <p>In a Score Point 4 paper, there are no errors that impair the flow of communication. Errors are infrequent and have a minor impact on the overall communication; they are generally of the first-draft variety and may occur when students attempt sophisticated sentence construction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do words have very few or no capitalization errors? • Do sentences have very few or no punctuation errors? • Do words have very few or no spelling errors? • Do sentences have very few or no grammar or word usage errors? • Writing has very few or no paragraphing errors. • Writing has very few or no run-on sentences or sentence fragments. |
| Score | Does the writing sample exhibit an adequate command of language skills? |
| 3 | <p>In a Score Point 3 paper, errors are occasional but do not impede the flow of communication; the writer's meaning is not seriously obscured by errors in language conventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do words have occasional capitalization errors? • Do sentences have occasional punctuation errors? • Do words have occasional spelling errors? • Do sentences have occasional grammar or word usage errors? • Writing may have occasional paragraphing errors. • Writing may have run-on sentences or sentence fragments. |
| Score | Does the writing sample exhibit a minimal command of language skills? |
| 2 | <p>In a Score Point 2 paper, errors are typically frequent and may cause the reader to stop and reread part of the writing. While some aspects of the writing may be more consistently correct than others, the existing errors do impair communication. With a little extra effort on the reader's part, it is still possible to discern most, if not all, of what the writer is trying to communicate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do words have frequent capitalization errors? • Do sentences have frequent punctuation errors? • Do words have frequent spelling errors? • Do sentences have frequent grammar or word usage errors? • Writing may have errors in paragraphing, or paragraphing may be missing. • Writing is likely to have run-on sentences or sentence fragments. |
| Score | Does the writing sample exhibit a less than minimal command of language skills? |
| 1 | <p>In a Score Point 1 paper, errors are serious and numerous; they often cause the reader to struggle to discern the writer's meaning. Errors are frequently of a wide variety. There may be sections where it is impossible to ascertain what the writer is attempting to communicate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do words have many capitalization errors? • Do sentences have many punctuation errors? • Do words have many spelling errors? • Do sentences have many grammar and word usage errors? • Writing may have errors in paragraphing, or paragraphing may be missing. • Writing is likely to have run-on sentences or sentence fragments. |

NOTE: The elements of this rubric are applied holistically; no element is intended to supersede any other element. The variety and proportion of errors in relation to the length of the writing sample are considered. A very brief paper consisting of two or three sentences may receive no more than 2 score points.

These scoring rubrics are used on the spring *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 5–8.

English/Language Arts
Constructed-Response Items

Session three, English/Language Arts, contains a reading comprehension task. This task allows the students to demonstrate their understanding and comprehension of narrative or informational text. The reading comprehension task consists of one passage and several constructed-response (CR) questions. Because this is a reading comprehension task, all the information students need to answer the questions correctly is in the text. All responses should be based on information from the text and will be scored for reading comprehension *only*. The following pages show the CR questions.

An example of a top-score response is given for each CR question. The top-score response demonstrates a performance that exceeds the expectations of what is required to receive two points. The top-score response contains multiple pieces of text-based information and support drawn from the reading passage that accompanied this item, many elements of which students typically use in their responses to receive two points.

English/Language Arts
2-point Constructed-Response (CR) Rubric

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| 2 points | Proficient The response fulfills all the requirements of the task. The information given is text-based and relevant to the task. |
| 1 point | Partially Proficient The response fulfills some of the requirements of the task, but some of the information may be too general, too simplistic, or not supported by the text. |
| 0 point | Not Proficient The response does not fulfill the requirements of the task because it contains information that is inaccurate, incomplete, and/or missing altogether. |

Constructed-Response
Standard 2: Reading Comprehension and Analysis of Informational Text

Question 1

If the movement to ban plastic bags and bottles spreads to other cities and states, what arguments would opponents of the ban MOST LIKELY use to prevent plastic-bag and bottle bans from being successful? Support your answer with details from the article.

Top-Score Response:

The pro-plastic bottles and bags side will do two things to prevent the bans from being passed. The first thing they will do is argue that plastic bags do not hurt the environment because they get reused to carry other things like sandwiches. The second thing they will do is say that making plastic bags and bottles is good for the economy because 10,000 people have jobs making them.

***Note:** The top-score response demonstrates a performance that exceeds the expectations of what is required to receive two points. The top-score response contains multiple pieces of text-based information and support drawn from the reading passage that accompanied this item, many elements of which students typically use in their responses to receive two points.*

Constructed-Response
Standard 2: Reading Comprehension and Analysis of Informational Text

Question 2

Explain why the author uses imagery to provoke an emotional reaction from the reader. Support your answer with details from the article.

Top-Score Response:

Rather than just telling the reader that people should be responsible for where plastic bags end up, the author uses distinct images to get an emotional reaction from the reader to prompt them to be more responsible. For example, the author describes a whale that died after having consumed plastic bags. The author later states that plastic bags are “hanging from trees and littering our beaches”- images that reinforce the photograph of all the plastic bags blown up on a fence. These images sadden and/or anger readers and thus cause an emotional reaction to help the author persuade readers.

***Note:** The top-score response demonstrates a performance that exceeds the expectations of what is required to receive two points. The top-score response contains multiple pieces of text-based information and support drawn from the reading passage that accompanied this item, many elements of which students typically use in their responses to receive two points.*

Constructed-Response
Standard 3: Reading Comprehension and Analysis of Informational Text

Question 3

How are statistics used to support the author's claim that plastic bottles and bags are harming the environment? Support your answer with details from the article.

Top-Score Response:

The author uses a variety of statistics to support the assertion that plastic bottles and bags are harming the environment. For example, the author writes that "Since 2009, 12 states have considered a variety of plastic-bag bans, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures." Additionally, the author mentions that "Americans use between 70 billion and 100 billion plastic bags annually, with families taking home an average of 1,500 a year." Finally, the author states that "It takes about 12 million barrels of oil to make the plastic" for bags that mostly end up in landfills, further harming the environment.

***Note:** The top-score response demonstrates a performance that exceeds the expectations of what is required to receive two points. The top-score response contains multiple pieces of text-based information and support drawn from the reading passage that accompanied this item, many elements of which students typically use in their responses to receive two points.*

Extended-Response
Standard 5: Writing Applications
Standard 6: English Language Conventions

Question 4

Read these lyrics from the song “Back Home Again in Indiana.” Then complete the writing activity that follows.

Back home again in Indiana
And it seems that I can see
The gleaming candlelight, still shining bright
Through the sycamores for me
The new mown hay sends all its fragrance
From the fields I used to roam
When I dream about the moonlight on the Wabash
Then I long for my Indiana home

Think about a place that is special to you. This place could be in Indiana, as suggested by the lyrics in the song, or someplace else—even in your imagination. Write a description of this special place and tell why it is meaningful to you.

**Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric
Grades 5–12**

SCORE POINT 4

A Score Point 4 paper represents a solid performance. It fully accomplishes the task.

Ideas and Content

Does the writing sample fully accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it

- present a unifying theme or main idea without going off on tangents?
- stay focused on topic and task?

Does the writing sample include many relevant ideas? Does it

- provide ample information and more than adequate supporting details that are developed?
- explore many facets of the topic?

Organization

Are the ideas in the writing sample organized logically? Does the writing

- present a meaningful, cohesive whole with a beginning, a middle, and an end (i.e., include a solid introduction and conclusion)?
- progress in an order that enhances meaning of text?
- include smooth transitions (e.g., use topic sentences) between sentences and paragraphs to enhance meaning of text? (Writing may have an occasional lapse.)

Style

Does the writing sample exhibit very good word usage? Does it

- include vocabulary to make explanations detailed and precise, descriptions rich, and actions clear and vivid?
- demonstrate control of vocabulary?

Does the writing sample demonstrate very good writing technique?

- Is the writing very fluent?
- Does it include varied sentence patterns, including complex sentences?
- Does it demonstrate use of writer's techniques (e.g., literary conventions such as imagery and dialogue and/or literary genres such as humor and suspense)?

Voice

Does the writing sample demonstrate effective adjustment of language and tone to task and reader? Does it

- exhibit appropriate register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect) to suit task?
- demonstrate a sense of audience?
- exhibit an original perspective (e.g., authoritative, lively, and/or exciting)?

NOTE: These scoring rubrics are used with statewide assessments in Grades 5–12.

**Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric
Grades 5–12**

| SCORE POINT 3 | |
|---|--|
| <p>A Score Point 3 paper represents a good performance. It accomplishes the task, but generally needs to exhibit more development, better organization, or a more sophisticated writing style to receive a higher score.</p> | |
| Ideas and Content | |
| <p>Does the writing sample accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present a unifying theme or main idea? (Writing may include minor tangents.) • stay mostly focused on topic and task? <p>Does the writing sample include relevant ideas? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include sufficient information and supporting details? (Details may not be fully developed; ideas may be listed.) • explore some facets of the topic? | |
| Organization | |
| <p>Are the ideas in the writing sample organized logically? Does the writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present a meaningful whole with a beginning, a middle, and an end despite an occasional lapse (e.g., a weak introduction or conclusion)? • generally progress in an order that enhances meaning of text? • include transitions between sentences and paragraphs to enhance meaning of text? (Transitions may be rough, although some topic sentences are included.) | |
| Style | |
| <p>Does the writing sample exhibit good word usage? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include vocabulary that is appropriately chosen, with words that clearly convey the writer's meaning? • demonstrate control of basic vocabulary? <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate good writing technique?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the writing fluent? • Does it exhibit some varied sentence patterns, including some complex sentences? • Does it demonstrate an attempt to use writer's techniques (e.g., literary conventions such as imagery and dialogue and/or literary genres such as humor and suspense)? | |
| Voice | |
| <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate an attempt to adjust language and tone to task and reader? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generally exhibit appropriate register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect) to suit task? (The writing may occasionally slip out of register.) • demonstrate some sense of audience? • attempt an original perspective? | |

NOTE: These scoring rubrics are used with statewide assessments in Grades 5–12.

**Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric
Grades 5–12**

| SCORE POINT 2 | |
|---|--|
| A Score Point 2 paper represents a performance that minimally accomplishes the task. Some elements of development, organization, and writing style are weak. | |
| Ideas and Content | |
| <p>Does the writing sample minimally accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attempt a unifying theme or main idea? • stay somewhat focused on topic and task? <p>Does the writing sample include some relevant ideas? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include some information with only a few details, or list ideas without supporting details? • explore some facets of the topic? | |
| Organization | |
| <p>Is there an attempt to logically organize ideas in the writing sample? Does the writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a beginning, a middle, or an end that may be weak or absent? • demonstrate an attempt to progress in an order that enhances meaning? (Progression of text may sometimes be unclear or out of order.) • demonstrate an attempt to include transitions? (Are some topic sentences used? Are transitions between sentences and paragraphs weak or absent?) | |
| Style | |
| <p>Does the writing sample exhibit ordinary word usage? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contain basic vocabulary, with words that are predictable and common? • demonstrate some control of vocabulary? <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate adequate writing technique?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the writing generally fluent? • Does it contain mostly simple sentences (although there may be an attempt at more varied sentence patterns)? • Is it generally ordinary and predictable? | |
| Voice | |
| <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate an attempt to adjust language and tone to task and reader? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate a difficulty in establishing a register (e.g., formal, personal, or dialect)? • demonstrate little sense of audience? • generally lack an original perspective? | |

NOTE: These scoring rubrics are used with statewide assessments in Grades 5–12.

**Extended Response Writing Applications Rubric
Grades 5–12**

| SCORE POINT 1 |
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| <p>A Score Point 1 paper represents a performance that only partially accomplishes or fails to accomplish the task. Some responses may exhibit difficulty maintaining a focus. Others may be too brief to provide sufficient development of the topic or evidence of adequate organizational or writing style.</p> |
| Ideas and Content |
| <p>Does the writing sample only partially accomplish or fail to accomplish the task (e.g., support an opinion, summarize, tell a story, or write an article)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing may attempt a main idea, or the main idea may be difficult to discern. • Does the writing sometimes lose focus or ineffectively establish focus? <p>Does the writing sample include few relevant ideas?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the writing sample include little information and few or no details? • Writing may explore only one or two facets of the topic. |
| Organization |
| <p>Is there a minimal attempt to logically organize ideas in the writing sample?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the writing have only one or two of the three elements: beginning, middle, and end? • Is the writing sometimes difficult to follow? (Progression of text may be confusing, unclear, or difficult to discern.) • Are transitions weak or absent (e.g., few or no topic sentences)? |
| Style |
| <p>Does the writing sample exhibit minimal word usage? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contain limited vocabulary? (Words may be used incorrectly.) • demonstrate minimal or less than minimal control of vocabulary? <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate minimal or less than minimal writing technique?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the writing exhibit some or little fluency? • Does it rely mostly on simple sentences or demonstrate problems with sentence patterns? • Is it often repetitive, predictable, or dull? |
| Voice |
| <p>Does the writing sample demonstrate language and tone that may be inappropriate to task and reader? Does it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate use of a register inappropriate to the task (e.g., slang or dialect in a formal setting)? • demonstrate little or no sense of audience? • lack an original perspective? |

NOTE: These scoring rubrics are used with statewide assessments in Grades 5–12.

Language Conventions Rubric Grades 5–8

In their writing, students will apply the Standard English conventions defined in the Indiana Academic Standards for their grade and all previous grades.

| Score | Does the writing sample exhibit a good command of language skills? |
|----------|--|
| 4 | <p>In a Score Point 4 paper, there are no errors that impair the flow of communication. Errors are infrequent and have a minor impact on the overall communication; they are generally of the first-draft variety and may occur when students attempt sophisticated sentence construction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do words have very few or no capitalization errors? • Do sentences have very few or no punctuation errors? • Do words have very few or no spelling errors? • Do sentences have very few or no grammar or word usage errors? • Writing has very few or no paragraphing errors. • Writing has very few or no run-on sentences or sentence fragments. |
| Score | Does the writing sample exhibit an adequate command of language skills? |
| 3 | <p>In a Score Point 3 paper, errors are occasional but do not impede the flow of communication; the writer's meaning is not seriously obscured by errors in language conventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do words have occasional capitalization errors? • Do sentences have occasional punctuation errors? • Do words have occasional spelling errors? • Do sentences have occasional grammar or word usage errors? • Writing may have occasional paragraphing errors. • Writing may have run-on sentences or sentence fragments. |
| Score | Does the writing sample exhibit a minimal command of language skills? |
| 2 | <p>In a Score Point 2 paper, errors are typically frequent and may cause the reader to stop and reread part of the writing. While some aspects of the writing may be more consistently correct than others, the existing errors do impair communication. With a little extra effort on the reader's part, it is still possible to discern most, if not all, of what the writer is trying to communicate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do words have frequent capitalization errors? • Do sentences have frequent punctuation errors? • Do words have frequent spelling errors? • Do sentences have frequent grammar or word usage errors? • Writing may have errors in paragraphing, or paragraphing may be missing. • Writing is likely to have run-on sentences or sentence fragments. |
| Score | Does the writing sample exhibit a less than minimal command of language skills? |
| 1 | <p>In a Score Point 1 paper, errors are serious and numerous; they often cause the reader to struggle to discern the writer's meaning. Errors are frequently of a wide variety. There may be sections where it is impossible to ascertain what the writer is attempting to communicate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do words have many capitalization errors? • Do sentences have many punctuation errors? • Do words have many spelling errors? • Do sentences have many grammar and word usage errors? • Writing may have errors in paragraphing, or paragraphing may be missing. • Writing is likely to have run-on sentences or sentence fragments. |

NOTE: The elements of this rubric are applied holistically; no element is intended to supersede any other element. The variety and proportion of errors in relation to the length of the writing sample are considered. A very brief paper consisting of two or three sentences may receive no more than 2 score points.

These scoring rubrics are used on the spring *ISTEP+* assessment in Grades 5–8.